

flexible frame being affixed to both the external upper and the outer sole, the flexible frame comprising a dorsal portion extending from the outer sole substantially up to a top end of the external upper at about mid-height of a tibia area of the boot, and at least one lateral arm laterally extending from an upper end of the dorsal portion to one side of the boot.

2 Please amend claim 2 as follows:

2. (Amended) A sports boot comprising:

an outer sole and an external upper covering a user's foot and lower leg, the external upper comprising a flexible frame made of a flexible, substantially non-stretchable material, arranged along determinate directions of forces transmitted during use of the boot, said flexible frame being affixed to both the external upper and the outer sole, the flexible frame comprising a dorsal portion extending from the outer sole substantially up to a top end of the external upper, and at least one lateral arm laterally connecting the dorsal portion to one side of the boot, said lateral arm spaced above the outer sole at the dorsal portion and extending forwardly from the dorsal portion and connected to the outer sole forwardly of the dorsal portion.

Please amend claim 13 as follows:

2 13. (Three Times Amended) A sports boot, especially for gliding sports, comprising an outer sole and an external upper overlying the outer sole and covering a user's foot and lower leg, the external upper comprising a flexible frame made of a substantially non-stretchable material and affixed to the <sup>upper</sup> ~~upper~~ and <sup>outer</sup> ~~outer~~ sole, said flexible frame comprising a dorsal portion

extending vertically at the rear of the lower leg and including a space between said dorsal portion and said outer sole, said flexible frame further comprising at least one lateral portion, extending laterally along the foot, connected to said dorsal portion and to the sole, at each of its ends, wherein the external upper extends above an ankle region to about a middle region of a tibia of the user.

*C 2* Please amend claim 14 as follows: *Y*

14. (Three Times Amended) A sports boot, especially for gliding sports, comprising an outer sole and an external upper overlying the outer sole and covering a user's foot and lower leg, the upper including a flexible frame made of a substantially non-stretchable material and arranged to include at least a space between said dorsal portion and said outer sole so as to provide a predetermined moment of inertia along predetermined directions, wherein the external upper extends above an ankle region to about a middle region of a tibia of the user.

*C* Please add new claims 31 and 32 as follows:

*3* -- 31. A sports boot according to claim 13, wherein said flexible frame does not extend through a lower surface of said outer sole.

32. A sports boot according to claim 14, wherein said flexible frame does not extend through a lower surface of said outer sole. --